

Employment Incentive Programs

The province of Newfoundland failed to benefit under the Regional Development Incentives Act to such an extent that the Atlantic Development Council felt obliged to commission a study, which they did. This study was released last week. It highlights what we have been saying for a long time, namely that the government's blanket approach, shutdown approach and manure approach to the problem of regional disparity in this country, and the attempt to cope with that problem by thinly spreading incentives all across the country have failed. The study commissioned by ADC has recommended what we have been saying for some time, namely that there are areas in this country which should receive special consideration.

This study points out that Newfoundland could become a regional development laboratory in which the government could try out new innovations and programs. Obviously, the present programs are not working. The study highlights the serious problems which make it impossible for the present policy to work effectively. It highlights the transportation problems which we have in Newfoundland as a consequence of our isolation. These problems are not peculiar to Newfoundland. The four Atlantic provinces have transportation problems. We have these problems and the government fails to respond with a proper regional transportation policy. Instead of that, we have continuous increases in freight rates.

Canadian National Railways have been allowed seven or eight increases in freight rates since the freeze on freight rates under the Maritime Freight Rates Act was lifted two or three years ago. Transportation is obviously a problem. In this regard, I hope that my colleague from Newfoundland, the Minister of Transport (Mr. Jamieson), will read this report. I think it is a good report in what it says about transportation and the effect that transportation has on our position in confederation, as well as the lagging behind of our economy compared with the rest of the country. I hope the minister will be sufficiently impressed by this report to establish a task force to examine the effect that present transportation policies have on regional development programs and all of the other incentive programs the government may devise. The fact is we are just not in it.

The study also recommends that the government give consideration to what I describe as regional tariffs. That is not to suggest that we should have free trade areas all across this country. For example, I consider the auto pact a regional tariff because it only benefits Ontario. It is an agreement that affects Ontario and the Great Lake states. We could, for example, negotiate regional tariff programs between the Atlantic provinces and the New England states. We could have New Brunswick potatoes go into the state of Maine or New England in exchange for something in the state of Maine or New England. We could have Newfoundland processed fish going into the New England market and so on. These are examples of what I consider to be regional tariffs.

Unfortunately my time has expired. I hope that on another occasion I can continue this argument.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

[Mr. McGrath.]

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

SUBJECT MATTER OF QUESTIONS TO BE DEBATED

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel): Order. It is my duty pursuant to Standing Order 40, to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands (Mr. Douglas)—Energy—Possible pipeline through eastern Arctic—Assurance of majority Canadian ownership—Hypothecation of gas to United States; the hon. member for Frontenac-Lennox and Addington (Mr. Alkenbrack)—Transport—Responsibility of railways to people owning land along lines on which service abandoned; the hon. member for Assiniboia (Mr. Knight)—Veterans Affairs—Inquiry as to amendment of Veterans Land Act.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

ALLOTTED DAY S.O. 58—ALLEGED FAILURE OF GOVERNMENT'S INCENTIVE PROGRAMS TO STIMULATE TRADE AND CREATE EMPLOYMENT

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Hees (for Mr. Baldwin):

This House regrets that the government's expenditures for incentive programs have failed to stimulate production and trade in Canadian goods and services and to open increased opportunities for productive employment to Canadians.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. There have been some discussions and I think you will find there will be agreement that from this point on speeches be limited to 15 minutes.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel): Hon. members have heard the proposal of the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles). Is this agreed?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel): It is so ordered.

Mr. Bruce Howard (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, I enter the debate today somewhat amazed at the failure of opposition members to deal with the motion. I compliment the hon. member for St. John's East (Mr. McGrath) who actually spoke to the motion before us today. I want to tell him that later this day the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion (Mr. Roberts) will be dealing with many of the items he has raised.

The hon. member for St. John's East referred to the fact that some of the grant programs are not sufficiently extensive and do not benefit Newfoundland as much as other parts of the country. We regret that industry in Newfoundland has not developed in the past 25 years since that province came into confederation. However, I want to remind the hon. member that the fact that the